

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 978

INFO AMCONSUL ZURICH

UNCLAS BERN 2914

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: APER, SZ

SUBJ: LANGUAGE DESIGNATED POSITIONS, BERN AND ZURICH

REF: STATE 160235

1. GENERAL COMMENT. BERN AND ZURICH ARE IN QTE GERMAN SPEAKING UNQTE PART OF SWITZERLAND, AND FACILITY IN STANDARD GERMAN IS VERY USEFUL TOOL FOR ANY FSO OR FSSO ASSIGNED HERE, EVEN THOUGH LOCAL DIALECT AMOUNTS TO DIFFERENT LANGUAGE. STANDARD GERMAN IS WIDELY UNDERSTOOD AND IS USED BY PRESS, RADIO AND TV. ESSENTIALITY OF GERMAN VARIES WITH THE PARTICULAR POSITIONS AND READING KNOWLEDGE OF FRENCH IS IN SOME SITUATIONS ACCEPTABLE SUBSTITUTE.

2. FOLLOWING DESIGNATIONS ARE RECOMMENDED FOR BERN:

(A) POSITION NUMBER TITLE OF POSITION LANGUAGE

00-001 DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION 'GERMAN S-2/R-3

20-054 ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL OFFICER 'GERMAN S-2/R-3

20-116 ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL OFFICER 'GERMAN S-2/R-3

(NOTE: FRENCH R-3 MAY BE SUBSTITUTED FOR GERMAN R-3.)

BECAUSE VIRTUALLY ALL SWISS GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, BANKERS, AND BUSINESSMEN ABOVE OFFICERS NORMALLY DEAL WITH SPEAK ENGLISH, NEED FOR S-3 LEVEL OF SPEAKING PROFICIENCY IS NOT ESSENTIAL.

R-3 IN GERMAN OR FRENCH IS ESSENTIAL, HOWEVER, IN ORDER TO FOLLOW FPRESS AND TO READ GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS (WHICH ARE PRINTED IN BOTH LANGUAGES). WHILE GERMAN LANGUAGE PRESS IN SWITZERLAND GENERALLY GIVES BETTER, MORE THOROUGH

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COVERAGE OF DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN NEWS, AN OFFICER WHO CAN

READ WELL ONLY FRENCH LANGUAGE PRESS IS NOT AT SERIOUS DISADVANTAGE.

(B) POSITION NUMBER TITLE OF POSITION LANGUAGE

20-098 COMMERCIAL OFFICER GERMAN S-2/R-2

20-108 COMMERCIAL OFFICER GERMAN S-2/R-2

SWISS GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, BANKERS AND MOST BUSINESSMEN
THESE OFFICERS NORMALLY DEAL WITH SPEAK ENGLISH. HOWEVER,
A CONSIDERABLE PORTION OF MAIL RECEIVED IS IN GERMAN, AND IS
NORMALLY ANSWERED IN THAT LANGUAGE. MOREOVER, MANY BUSINESSMEN
DO PREFER SPEAK GERMAN. HENCE DESIGNATION OF S/2, R/2 AS
ESSENTIAL, WITH ASSUMPTION THAT ACTIVE OFFICERS IN THESE
POSITIONS WILL RAPIDLY MOVE TO S/3,R/3 LEVELS.

(C) POSITION NUMBER TITLE OF POSITION LANGUAGE

10-006 POLITICAL OFFICER GERMAN S-2/R-3

MOST OFFICIALS, JOURNALISTS AND OTHER POLITICALLY
SIGNIFICANT PERSONS THIS OFFICER MUST DEAL WITH SPEAK ENGLISH.
HE MUST, HOWEVER, BE ABLE TO READ GERMAN WELL TO FOLLOW PRESS
ADEQUATELY.

3. FOLLOWING DESIGNATIONS ARE RECOMMENDED FOR ZURICH:

POSITION NUMBER TITLE OF POSITION LANGUAGE

00-005 PRINCIPAL OFFICER GERMAN S-2/R-2

20-036 ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL OFFICER GERMAN S-2/R-2

LANGUAGE CONSIDERATIONS FOR THESE POSITIONS ARE ESSENTIALLY
SAME AS THOSE FOR COMMERCIAL OFFICER POSITIONS IN BERN (PARA TWO
(B) ABOVE).
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